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HUTTO TODAY

A Brief History

Before Hutto was settled, the first two stores in Williamson County were located on Brushy Creek in the Shiloh and Rice's Crossing communities, just southeast of present day Hutto. Many of Hutto's early settlers came from that area.

Hutto, Texas was not really established until 1876 when the International & Great Northern Railroad passed through land owned by James Emory Hutto and the fledgling town was named for him. The railroad officials designated the stop Hutto Station and the town of Hutto was born. James Hutto was born in Alabama on June 8, 1824. He came to Texas in 1847 and moved his family into Williamson County in 1855. It was in 1876 that Hutto sold fifty acres to the Texas Land Company of New York for a townsite and railroad right of way. Cheap prison labor was used to build the railroad tracks under the Texas prison lease system that was in effect at that time. Hutto became a wealthy cattleman in Williamson County; however, in 1885 he left Hutto and moved to Waco and entered the hardware business. No direct descendants of the Hutto family live here today. A freed slave, Adam Orgain, was also an early settler in the immediate vicinity and homesteaded earlier in 1854. Indians still abounded in the area. Soon a great many more people, primarily Swedish and German immigrants came to this area to farm, ranch and begin new lives in America.



View of East Street
(circa 1890)

The earliest settlers, including the town's founding father James E. Hutto, would line East Street with horse drawn carriages.

A depot was built in 1877 with W.H. Farley, Sr. as the railroad agent and the business area of Hutto was originally located on the south side of the railroad tracks. On June 19, 1886 a severe storm hit the small town and wiped out the south side business district including the first school (built in 1882) and the Baptist Church (built in 1883). It was not until 1890 that a real rebuilding effort took place, this time on the north side of the railroad tracks, and by 1892 two rows of store buildings surrounded East Street, the new main street of downtown Hutto. During the early 1890's, Hutto prospered and grew due to the fertile blackland soil that permitted tremendous cotton production on the surrounding farms; establishment of cotton gins and community activity abounded. Saturdays were an extremely active time in downtown Hutto with people and horse drawn vehicles everywhere. The comment was made by an observant citizen that; "No one had better get in a hurry in Hutto on a Saturday because you just couldn't move fast



Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan

through all the crowd in town.” It was reported that a merchant once took in \$5,000 on a Saturday in his Hutto store.

By 1898, thanks to the industry of its people and its strong agricultural base, the town of Hutto was bustling and had grown to support six churches, one school, one photography gallery, one confectionery store, one hotel, two drug stores, seven dry good stores, one bank, one tailor shop, one shoe shop, four blacksmiths, eight grocery stores including one meat market, one livery stable, one millinery shop, one lumber yard, one newspaper, two hardware stores, two cotton gins, one grist mill and five doctors.

In 1902, a fire destroyed almost all of the businesses on the east side of East Street in the downtown area. This fire decimated much of the business of downtown Hutto as the north half of the east side on Main Street was destroyed. The fire started when a gasoline stove exploded in the Jackson Restaurant.

On July 17, 1911 the town was officially incorporated and W.D. Holman, a member of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church, served as the first mayor of the City of Hutto. Another Swede, Charles E. Hanstrom, Sr. played an extremely vital role in the development of early Hutto. Hutto might not have incorporated had Hanstrom, along with J.D. Tinning, not installed the Hanstrom & Tinning Water Works in 1910 through his purchase of a drilling rig with which he drilled the first deep water well. This was a phenomenal year for Charles Hanstrom, for in 1910 he also built the first power plant for Hutto installing wires and poles and placing wiring in homes. Additionally, he started the first ice factory and was also partners with Mr. Tinning in a cotton gin. It was this same James D. Tinning that had invented a better cotton planter in 1897 for which he received patent No. 591,613 from the United States Patent Office.

In spite of World War I, the City of Hutto and its surrounding community had a bright future. Cotton was still king until 1929 and the collapse of the stock market. A long, hard depression had begun. The two banks at that time; Farmers and Merchants State Bank and Hutto National Bank, both closed during the Great Depression as did most of the other businesses in the City. Hutto, as a town and community, never fully recovered from this and struggled to the outbreak of, and through, World War II.



View of East Street
(circa 2005)

Examples of early 20th Century Texas architecture can still be found in historic downtown Hutto along East Street.



How Hutto Became the Hippo Capital of Texas

According to local legend, it was in 1915 that a circus train stopped in Hutto at the depot to take on passengers, pick up mail and possibly take on water and fuel for the steam locomotive. The circus train workers also would have taken this opportunity to care for their animals. At some point during this historic layover, it is said that the hippo got out of the railcar and made its way to the nearby, Cottonwood Creek causing much consternation for the circus workers. Local farmers and merchants watched the commotion in amusement and with interest as unsuccessful efforts were made to extricate the troublesome hippopotamus from the muddy waters of Cottonwood Creek. It is said that the Depot Agent, who at that time would have been Hal Farley, Jr., had to telegraph the communities of Taylor and Round Rock that were eight miles to the east and west of Hutto to the effect of: "Stop trains, hippo loose in Hutto". After much effort the hippo was prodded from the mud and water that resembled its natural habitat and was reloaded back on the train. Soon afterward the Hutto School adopted the hippopotamus as its mascot and as early as 1923 it appeared on the Hutto High School official graduation announcements. Other stories have been told, however, this is the most popular version of the origin of the hippo in Hutto.



"Henrietta"

A 7 ton concrete hippo placed along East Street by the Hutto Chamber of Commerce to recognize Hutto as the "Official Hippo Capital of Texas."

Other stories about the beginnings of the unique Hutto mascot are as follows: The big Swedish and German boys of Hutto were playing their smaller foes in football and the visiting coach is said to have stated "we can't beat those boys, they're big as hippos". Another story, also based on gridiron lore, was that the Hutto football team in the early twenties had no real jerseys and used feed sacks as their uniforms. The opposing coach allegedly said that the football team looked like a bunch of hippos in their make shift outfits.

Whatever story is the actual basis for the unique mascot, the hippopotamus, Hutto is the only school district and the only community in the United States to have the hippo as its primary identifier. Hutto and Hippo have become synonymous to the degree that when people say that they are from Hutto most often the first response is that of "Oh, the hippos". A yell used by the Hutto cheerleaders goes; "You say Hutto, We say Hippo". Hutto is hippo proud!



In 2003, the Texas Legislature recognized Hutto as the “Official Hippo Capital of Texas.” The Hutto Chamber of Commerce arranged for a 7 ton concrete hippo named “Henrietta” to be placed along East Street in 1986. The fast-growing City of Hutto is also home to a host of smaller concrete hippos. Further efforts by former Hutto Mayor Mike Fowler and the non-profit Hippos Unlimited, brought scores of smaller 125 pound concrete hippo statues to the city. They stand outside homes, businesses and public buildings as a symbol of community pride. Many are painted to reflect the unique character of the owner or business it represents.

Acknowledgements:

All historical information was gathered from the Hutto Heritage Foundation web site, <http://www.hutto-heritage-foundation.org/>. Special thanks to Mike Fowler, Keith Hickman, Elizabeth Page, and all those who helped compile the information on the Hutto Heritage Foundation web site.

The Physical Environment

Physical Land Form - Hutto’s terrain is generally flat except in areas close to creek corridors which transition to a slightly rolling terrain. The soil in Hutto consists of fertile blackland prairie soil-a great soil for agriculture purposes.

Floodplains and Creek Corridors - Brushy Creek is the largest watercourse in Hutto and bisects Hutto west to east in the southern half of Hutto. It drains water from the other major watercourse, Cottonwood Creek, in the southeast sector of the city. Cottonwood Creek is most known for the “hippo escape” in 1915.

In addition to serving as scenic and environmental-interest resources, the creeks and their flood plains serve as potential routes for hiking, walking, nature observation, school access, bicycling, and employment and civic facility access. The remaining creeks, Mustang Creek, Pecan Creek Branch, and McNutt Creek are either minor in size or are limited in the amount of corridor located in Hutto’s E.T.J.. These creek corridors still have the potential to be used for connectivity, but are not considered major corridors in Hutto.



Picture of Brushy Creek just east of FM 685.



Lakes - Three broad lakes can be found in Hutto's E.T.J., each of which was created by earthen dam construction by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. All three of these lakes are under the regulation of the Upper Brushy Creek Water Control Improvement District, which oversees all lake shore easements, dams, and spillways. These lakes are:

- Avery Lake (W.C.I.D. Dam #18), just west of SH 130 and north of Highway 79, 177 acre feet storage capacity
- Hutto Lake (W.C.I.D. Dam #20), just east of FM 685 and south of Brushy Creek, 81 acre feet storage capacity
- CR 137 Lake (W.C.I.D. Dam #21), just west of CR 137 and south of Brushy Creek, 79 acre feet storage capacity. There are also several small lakes/ponds just south of this lake.

Other Recreational Lands - The former Hutto COOP site, a 14.25 acre site in the center of town, offers a great central location with significant cultural value. This site is currently undeveloped for any recreational or cultural purposes, but still has the old silos and warehouses standing, at this time.

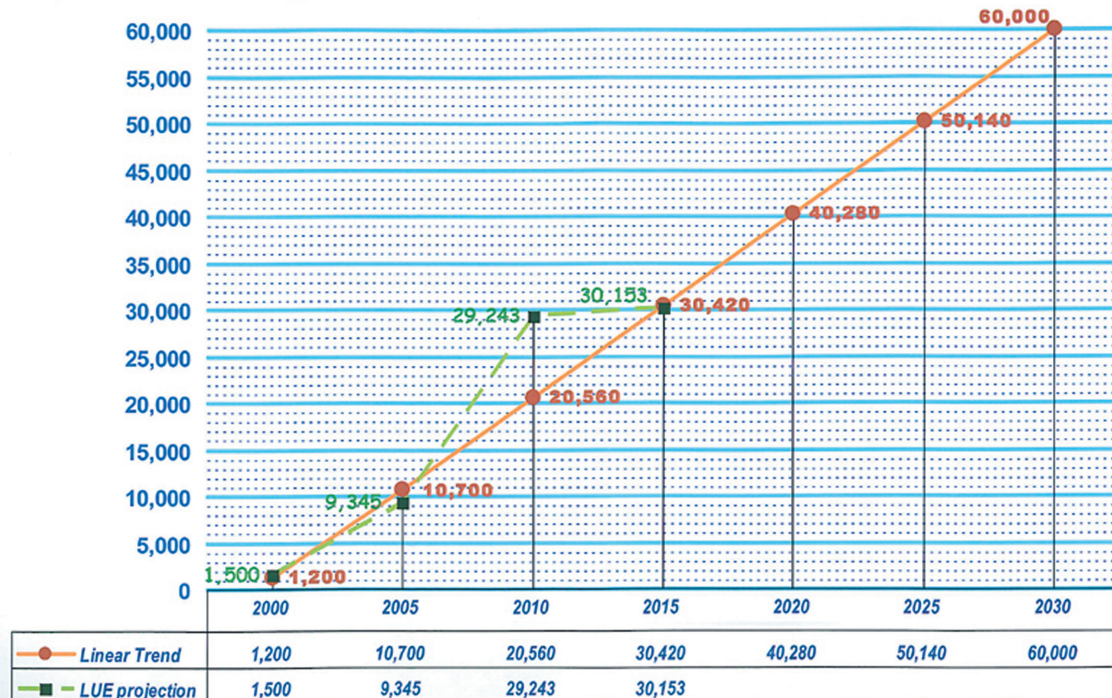
Community Profile

Hutto is a Texas Home Rule City, governed by an elected seven-member city council. The City Manager oversees the activities of all city departments and reports directly to the City Council. The City of Hutto has exploded from a small town of 630 residents in 1990 to an economically vibrant community with a population of approximately 11,500 people. Hutto is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. Officially, it was the second-fastest growing incorporated area in Texas between 2000 and 2005. (H.I.S.D. March 2006 Demographic Study, DeskMap System, Inc.)

Population Growth - The chart on the following page illustrates the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's population growth trend for the City of Hutto since 2000. The population growth is shown from 2000 because that is when Hutto started its population boom. The orange line on the chart depicts a simplistic linear growth trend from 2005 to 2030 that identifies growth intervals of roughly 10,000 every 5 years. The green line on the chart depicts a growth trend for the projected number of living unit equivalents (L.U.E.) based on completed or planned developments multiplied by 3.5 persons/L.U.E.. As you can see, based on the L.U.E. projection, Hutto will meet their 2015 population in 2010.



City of Hutto Population Estimates and Forecasts 2000-2030



Notes:

- 1.Linear trend is simple progression based on CAMPO's 2030 forecast of 60,000 and local estimate of 10,500 at end of 2005.
- 2.LUE projection is based on completed or planned developments and the anticipated number of living unit equivalents (LUEs) multiplied by 3.5 persons/LUE. Source: Hejl, Lee & Associates, Inc.

Population Growth Trend Chart (City of Hutto 2005 Growth Guidance Plan)

Hutto has shown a rapid increase in population, with a 891 percent change between 2000 and 2005. This is an extreme increase, but is similar to the growth occurring in surrounding communities as well.

Demographic Information - Identifying demographic characteristics of the current population is important in accurately assessing the needs of the City for parks and recreational facilities. The figures in Table 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 depict age, income, and race/ethnicity information based on the 2000 U.S. Census Data.

The 2000 Census identifies the median age in Hutto is 29.4 years and the largest demographic group is 25 to 34 years at 19.8%. The large number of children, 36.8%, helps identify that Hutto is overwhelmingly young families. As new housing continues at a similar pace, this trend will amplify.



Table 2.1 Year 2000 Age Characteristics (Hutto vs. Texas)*		
AGE	PERCENT - HUTTO	PERCENT - TEXAS
0-9	20.8%	24%
10-19	16%	8%
20-34	25.4%	23%
35-54	27.1%	33%
55-64	3.7%	9%
65+	7%	4%

* U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Census

The 2000 Census identifies the median household income in Hutto to be \$53,295. The household incomes mainly range between \$35,000 to \$75,000 with 50.2% of Hutto's households falling in this range. The median household incomes of Hutto are above those of the State of Texas but on average with those of Central Texas. Table 2.2 depicts income distribution in the City of Hutto.

Table 2.2 Year 2000 Income Distribution*	
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	PERCENT - HUTTO
Less than \$24,999	15.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	21%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	29.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	7.7%
\$150,000 or more	4.1%

* U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Census

The 2000 Census identifies Hutto's population as predominately white at 67% with the Hispanic population the second largest at 26.7%. It is reasonable to assume that as new housing opportunities increase in Hutto, the population growth will include more minorities that have the prevailing age and income characteristics that were discussed earlier.



Table 2.3 Year 2000 Race Characteristics*	
RACE/ETHNICITY	PERCENT - HUTTO
White	67%
Hispanic	26.7%
Black	4.7%
Asian	0.3%
American Indian	1%
Other	0.3%

* U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Census

Education / Schools Profile

Hutto residents are served by Hutto Independent School District, one of the fastest growing school districts in the country, from primary school through high school. Table 2.4 illustrates the tremendous growth rate in Hutto ISD's five campuses.

Table 2.4 HISD Enrollment Growth*		
CAMPUS	05-06 Enrollment	06-07 Enrollment**
Cottonwood Creek E.S.	0	650
Hutto E.S.	841	633
Johnson E.S.	856	690
Hutto M.S.	656	797
Hutto H.S.	774	920
Total	3127	3690

* Hutto ISD Demographic Report 2006 (DeskMap Systems Inc.)

** Enrollment as of 2nd week of school 2006